



LIVING GRACE
COMMUNITY CHURCH

“Walking in Submission to Christ-Part 3”

Sermon Date: May 1st, 2022

Reflections on Sunday’s Sermon

Below is a reference to the section of the New City Catechism that we went over on Sunday:

The New City Catechism—Lord’s Day 18

Will God Allow Our Disobedience and Idolatry to Go Unpunished?

No, every sin is against the sovereignty, holiness, and goodness of God, and against his righteous law, and God is righteously angry with our sins and will punish them in his just judgment both in this life, and in the life to come.

Prayer

Praise God who determined to restore in us the privilege of working as unto Him. Praise Jesus in whom we have newness of life and the ability to render service that is pleasing to Him. Praise the Holy Spirit who is working in us a sincere heart in all that we do and in all of our relationships. As you pray, consider making this prayer your own (this prayer was taken from At the Throne of Grace by John MacArthur).

O Father, our hearts overflow with joy and gratitude because we have been regenerated. Our hearts have totally been renewed. Nevertheless, in this earthly life we still face the presence of remaining sin in our flesh. Give us the strength and a heartfelt willingness—by the power of Your Spirit—to mortify the sin in our members. Give us such a love for Christ and a devotion to virtue and holiness that we will gladly yield ourselves as dutiful servants of righteousness. Help us to do all our work with excellence, in Your sight as well as in the eyes of others. Remind us each moment to give You glory even in the smallest, most mundane activities of life. When high unemployment or other economic, political, or social difficulties trouble our land, help us not to fear, but to trust in Your provision. May we not yearn for worldly approval. We know that it would be the very height of infidelity to seek accolades from the same world that hated Christ. Help us to be faithful and may we (like Christ) simply scorn worldly shame for the sake of the joy set before us. We bring all these prayers before You in His holy name. Amen.

Scripture

Ephesians 6:5-9 (ESV)

⁵ Bondservants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ, ⁶ not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, ⁷ rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, ⁸ knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free. ⁹ Masters, do the same to them, and stop your threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him.

Handling the Word

Let's break down the passage:

1. What type of obedience are believing slaves to render to their master as they do Christ (v. 5)?
2. Doing the will of God from the heart, what type of obedience is unacceptable for believing slaves (v. 6)?
3. Whether slave or free, what type of motivation should mark all of our service (v. 7)?
4. What is the result of rendering service with a good will (v. 8)?
5. How are masters to treat their slaves and why (v. 9)?

Understanding and Applying

1. Notice that the bondservant's obedience is not conditional upon the type of master they have (Colossians 3:22). Quite simply, they are to obey them 'with fear and trembling (reverence or honor) and with a sincere (genuine) heart' as they would Christ (v. 6). In Christ, our attitude is not subject to man but to Christ. How does this challenge you, or the culture in general, in determining who is worthy of your obedience, respect, and sincerity? Why might this attitude in Christ actually be liberating as you go through life under different authority figures or bosses?

2. It is also the case that the bondservant's work is not conditional upon the type of task. As Colossians 3:23 says, 'Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord...' In Christ our efforts are not subject to the ideal job but to Christ. How does this perspective in Christ challenge you, or the culture in general, in determining what job, work, or service is worthy of your whole heart? How does an eternal view of work actually liberate our hearts as we consider our day-to-day responsibilities, jobs, or services?

3. Sinclair Ferguson states, "Paul operated under the deep conviction that social and personal conditions were not the primary issues of life—fellowship with God, freedom from sin, transformation into Christ-likeness, and the advance of the kingdom of God—these were his central concerns." In Christ we have the privilege of viewing life from an eternal perspective. Based on the passages below, why is it good that our work, service, or responsibilities depend upon Christ and not ideal conditions?
 - Romans 5:3-5; 8:28

 - 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

 - Galatians 6:7-10

4. In Christ the bondservant's motivation for obedience changes, 'no longer by the way of eye-service, as people pleasers, but...doing the will of God from the heart' (v. 6). Through Christ, our obedience begins to flow from genuineness rather than flow from deception, hypocrisy, personal gain, or fear of man. As believers, why can our obedience flow from purity and not selfishness or fear (Matthew 6:19-21, 31-33; 10:28-32)? How does our justification and adoption in Christ relate to our new motivation for obedience?

5. Working as unto the Lord, we are reminded that whatever good we do, we will receive back from the Lord (v.8). Regarding a return on the good that we do on earth, please read this article (<https://www.gotquestions.org/rewards-in-heaven.html>). How does this article give clarity to the relationship between obedience and rewards? In your own words, why should/will heartfelt obedience stir you to glorify God and not yourself (Ephesians 2:10, Philippians 2:12-13)?
6. Masters are commanded to ‘do the same’ (v. 9) and “treat their slaves with respect and fear and with sincerity of heart as to Christ” (Snodgrass). No longer bound by selfishness or fear, believing masters can acknowledge the equality of their slaves before Christ though their social conditions may differ. How does this allude to the fact that there is no social hierarchy within the church (Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 2:17-19)? What tend to be the true reasons as to why those in power treat those under them poorly or unfairly or with threats?
7. To treat their slaves with dignity and respect, believing masters are reminded that God is both their Master, and He shows no partiality (v. 9). Is there a relationship in your life—in the home, church, workplace, or wherever—where you need these reminders and if so, why? Also, how does our time of communion during the Sunday service draw our attention to how God sees and relates to all those at LG and therefore, how we are to relate with all those at LG?
8. Praise God who frees us from the bondage of sin, self, and fear in order that we might render all of our service with a good will and unto our Lord Jesus Christ. How does this passage lead you to praise Jesus, and how does it shape your prayers as you consider your life and work?

“Have you learned that the gospel can work anywhere, under any circumstances? The grass always seems greener somewhere else! The gospel’s power is not dependent on favorable human situations or sympathetic people but on the power of God, the grace of Christ, and the presence of the Holy Spirit. This made first-century slaves free men and women in Christ long before the abolition of slavery. If the gospel of Jesus Christ can work under those circumstances, it can surely work where you spend forty hours or more each week.”

-Sinclair Ferguson